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Title: Comparative Studies in  
Education: Wales and  
Belgium

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INTRODUCTORY NOTES

Division: VI

TITLE: COMPARATIVE STUDIES IN EDUCATION: BELGIUM  
WALES

by J.R. Hurley.

NOTE:

These studies are brief summaries of secondary works. They are by no means exhaustive but are intended to outline the educational policy in two areas where linguistic minorities have received some recognition.

H. B. Neatby,  
Supervisor.









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Comparative Studies in Education: Belgium.

The value of studying the problems of education in Wales, it will be remembered, was limited to a comparison with the English-speaking provinces of Canada. Belgium, on the other hand, permits one to make comparisons between education in that country and in Canada as a whole. In 1932, Belgium finally decided to resolve its problems of bilingualism by dividing the country into two unilingual sectors, with bilingualism retained in the capital region and along the linguistic frontier. Unilingualism in the Flemish and Walloon territories was not limited to education alone, but extended also to administration and to the courts. The situation then obtaining in Belgium bears a certain resemblance to the situation existing in the English-speaking provinces, particularly in Manitoba since 1890, although Quebec has never declared itself a unilingual French-speaking region.

A recent publication of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs summarizes in a very succinct manner the principal similarities in the linguistic and ethnic problems of Belgium and Canada:<sup>1</sup>

"Although a slight numerical majority when Belgium became independent in 1830, the Flemish were an economic, social and psychological minority. They felt much the way French Canadians, who are furthermore a numerical minority, have felt. Today, the Flemish, not the French-speaking Walloons, identify themselves with French Canadians."

<sup>1</sup>Anne Francis, Behind the Headlines: Language - Bridge or Barrier, Published for the Canadian Institute of International Affairs by the Baxter Publishing Company, Vol. XXIII, no. 4 (Toronto: February 1964), p. 3





"Up until the end of the First World War, the northern part of Belgium was poor and under-developed, the way Quebec has been until recently. Wallonia was prosperous and industrialized, thanks to rich coal mines. For a century, the Flemish were regarded as the hewers of wood and drawers of water like the once 'cheap and docile labour' of Quebec."

"Flemish resentment over economic inequality was reinforced by resentment over language because French was the language of the government, of the professions, of business executives - in fact, of the ruling class. A Flemish-speaking Belgian could not get a job as a civil servant unless he could speak and write French. A Walloon did not need to learn Flemish in order to get to the top of the ladder. This is a situation which has a familiar ring to French Canadian ears."

One might add that the Germans did much during the Second World War to encourage Flemish demands in the hope, of course, that this would weaken the country. Consequently, the Flemish came out of the War with a clearer idea of what they desired. They were further strengthened by a high natality rate, whereas that of Wallonia is one of the lowest in Europe. The Flemish ports of Antwerp, Ostend, and Ghent are currently enjoying an economic boom, while/a <sup>there is</sup> degree of depression in Wallonia because of the closing of certain coal mines. All of this tends to upset the old economic relationship of the Flemings and the Walloons.

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As a new bourgeoisie rises in Flanders, an element of class struggle adds itself to the enduring Flemish-French linguistic struggle. While there is no clear parallel in Canada, the economic renaissance in Quebec has given rise to propositions among separatists and staunch autonomists that are akin to those made by their counterparts in Belgium. English-speaking Canadians and French-speaking Belgians are turning in increasing numbers to the idea of federalism as opposed to centralization in order to find a way out of the current dilemma; at the same time in Flanders as in French Canada, where properly constituted federalism was once hailed as the optimum political solution to the problems of a bilingual society with two major cultures, vocal elements are now rejecting federalist overtures as too little too late.

1. The Belgian Educational System:

Since<sup>the</sup>/establishment of Belgium over 130 years ago, two main teaching systems have evolved within the compass of the Constitution. One is the public system, consisting of State, provincial (of which there are relatively few), and communal institutions; the other is the private system of enseignement privé or enseignement libre, and the immense majority of these institutions are Catholic.<sup>2</sup> The organization and structure of the two systems, however, are highly similar. To indicate the relative importance of the various sectors, one might note that 13% of the general student body at all levels of scholastic endeavour in 1960-61 enrolled were/in State institutions, 1.5% in provincial institutions, 27% in communal institutions, and 58.5% in private institutions.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Unesco, "Belgium", World Survey of Education, Vol III, Secondary Education, Paris: 1961, p. 234.

<sup>3</sup>These percentages have been derived by the author from the figures given on pages 20 & 21 of the Belgian Annuaire Statistique de l'Enseignement, 1962. Of 1,902,688 students, 258,862/ were in State institutions, 28,109 in provincial institutions, 520,296 in institutions directed by the communes, and 1,095,421 in private institutions.





In the private sector, the various scholastic institutions are divided into two major groups: the 'écoles adoptées', which are recognized by the communes as proper substitutes for public schools, and the 'écoles adoptables', which are independent of the communes, but submit to State inspection and receive State grants.

## 2. Linguistic Situation

Although Belgium is considered to be a bilingual country for the purposes of administration and justice, there are actually three 'national' languages. The country is divided principally between Flemish-speaking to the north, who constitute the majority of the total population, and the French-speaking to the south, who constitute an enormous minority. According to Anne Francis, there are about 100,000 German-speaking Belgians out of a total population of 9,150,000. The German-speaking live in the eastern communes along the border with Germany; they have certain linguistic rights in education which will be discussed in a subsequent section.

There are no provisions for education through the medium of German at the superior or university level of education in Belgium. Limiting ourselves, then, to a consideration of total enrollment at the pre-primary, the primary, and the secondary levels, the following linguistic breakdown should be of interest. <sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>These percentages have been derived by the author from the figures supplied in the Annuaire Statistique de l'Enseignement, 1962, and in the Annuaire Statistique de la Belgique, Tome 84, 1963. German linguistic rights at the secondary level are limited to the 'quatrième degré' of the Primaire, which is, in fact, an extension beyond normal primary schooling.





	<u>1958/59</u>	<u>1960/61</u>	<u>1962/63</u>
Total enrollment (pre-primary, primary and secondary)	1,729,187	1,850,689	1,943,863
French-speaking enrollment	41.1%	41.7%	41.5%
Flemish-speaking enrollment	58.6%	57.9%	58.2%
German-speaking enrollment	0.3%	0.4%	0.3%

At the superior level of education, French-speaking enrollment is higher than Flemish-speaking enrollment, although the latter is increasing at a greater rate. In 1958/59, Flemish-speaking enrollment stood at 20,233, compared with 25,598 for the French-speaking; the same enrollments in 1962/63 stood at 29,772 and 32,296 respectively. However, Flemish strides are not so great if one considers university enrollment and excludes superior normal and technical studies. Enrollment for the Flemish-speaking increased from 10,752 to 14,731 during the period in question, and from 17,523 to 20,719 for the French-speaking.

The linguistic divisions in education might be related to scholastic organization, using the statistics for 1960/61. In that year, no German-speaking students, studying through the medium of German, were enrolled in provincial schools, and the vast majority of such students were enrolled in schools directed by communes (5,567 out of 6,600). Of the students following their programme of studies in French, the majority were in public schools (465,095 out of 800,623), and of these, 315,871 were in schools directed by the communes. On the other hand, of the students following their programme of studies in Flemish, two-thirds were enrolled in private schools (759,324 out of 1,095,465).





### 3. The Settlement of 1932:

Generalized bilingualism in Belgium, it will be remembered, was ended in 1932, at which time the country was divided into two unilingual regions with a bilingual capital and frontier region. The principal articles of the Law of July 14th, 1932, respecting education follow:<sup>5</sup>

"Art. 1 - The language of instruction in the Kindergarten and the Communal Primary schools, adopted or adoptable, is Flemish in the Flemish region of the country, French in the Walloon section of the country.

"Art. II - Children whose mother-tongue is not the language of the region have the right to receive their instruction in their mother-tongue. However, the Communes and the Directors of adoptable schools will remain the judges of the real need for this linguistic arrangement and the opportunity of putting it into practice. No account will be taken of children who are not citizens of Belgium.

"Art. III - From the second degree of the primary school, the children admitted into such classes as permitted in Art. II are compelled to learn the language of the region in such a way as to be able to follow with advantage, on leaving the Third Degree (Primary), either the courses of the Fourth Degree (Primary), or the courses of Technical Instruction, or the courses of 'Enseignement Moyen' given in the language of the region.

"Art. IV - In the schools of the linguistic frontier (Agglomération Bruxelloise) and the bilingual communes of the linguistic frontier, the teaching medium will be the mother-tongue of the child or the language which he normally uses at home.

"Art. V - In the localities mentioned in the preceding article, the teaching of the second language is compulsory, from the third year of primary studies, at least three hours per week, without exceeding in any case six hours per week."

The law provided, then, for two unilingual regions in which the linguistic minority would have the right to receive instruction through the medium of its mother-tongue, at the pre-primary and primary levels, provision being made for adequate teaching of the language of the region so that post-primary education might be conducted in the second

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<sup>5</sup>These articles, translated by Chiasson, appear in Rémi J. Chiasson, Bilingualism in the Schools of Eastern Nova Scotia, Les Editions Ferland (Quebec: 1962), p. 102.





language. This right, however, was subject to a certain amount of discretion (Article II). Children in schools in the capital area or along the linguistic frontier were allowed to be taught in their mother-tongue, with the teaching of the second language obligatory from the third year of primary studies. Two Linguistic Inspectors, one Walloon and the other Flemish, were appointed to safeguard the observation of the law.

During intermediate schooling, a minimum of four hours per week might be devoted to the study of the second national language, with a possible extension to six where the extra two hours would be used for language practice alone. The extension would not apply to English and German, two popular subjects of language study. "The first language is always that of the region; the second language may be either French or Nederlands, English or German. Everywhere in Flanders the second language is French with extended timetable; in the south-eastern provinces the majority of pupils study Nederlands as second language, those who propose to become civil servants choosing Nederlands with extended timetable. In the Brussels region and the bilingual areas on the linguistic frontier, Nederlands or French, both with extended time-tables, are imposed as second languages."<sup>6</sup>

A word might be said about the study of languages other than Flemish and French. Three hours a week might be devoted to the study of a third language. "By 'foreign languages' is meant, in practice, English and German, preference for one or the other depending on political and local conditions. Hence, in schools in the central area and in the west, German is less and less in favour, especially since the

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<sup>6</sup>R. E. Davies, Bilingualism in Wales, Juta & Company, Ltd. (Cape Town: 1954), p. 79.





last war. The preference for English is, however, also subject to fluctuation: after enjoying immense prestige immediately after the liberation, particularly in the Industrial schools, its popularity has since fallen to a more normal level. Romance languages like Spanish and Italian are also used to some extent, especially in the Walloon region; but their usefulness is less pronounced and their development consequently more difficult."<sup>7</sup>

"A regulation of September, 1944, makes English the third language where it is not the second. In some schools where English is the second language for certain sections, Nederlands is taught as the third; and in some schools in the province of Liege, where German is the second language, English becomes the third. The fourth language is usually German. In some schools in the province of Liege, sections which have taken German as second language can take Nederlands as a fourth. Hence Nederlands is omitted by some few pupils in Belgian Public Secondary and Intermediate schools."<sup>8</sup>

#### 4. The settlement of 1963:

Apparently the provisions of the settlement of 1932 were never properly put into effect along the linguistic frontier with respect to the establishment of bilingual municipalities where thirty per cent of the community might form a linguistic minority. Flemish-French tension had reached such a pitch by the early 1960's that the Government was forced once again to seek a solution to the problem.

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 77.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 80.



Rather than seek generalized bilingualism, the Government decided to entrench the principal of two unilingual regions by redrawing linguistic frontiers, establishing minority guarantees in certain communes, and making comprehensive provisions for bilingualism in the mixed communities astride the linguistic frontier. Four articles of the new law of July 30th, 1963 bearing on the medium of instruction are worth quoting at length.<sup>9</sup>

"Chapitre II. - Langue de l'enseignement.

"Art. 4. La langue de l'enseignement est le néerlandais dans la région de langue néerlandaise, le français dans la région de langue française et l'allemand dans la région de langue allemande, sauf les cas prévus aux articles 6 à 8.

"Art. 5. Dans l'arrondissement de Bruxelles-Capitale, la langue de l'enseignement est le néerlandais ou le français, selon la langue maternelle ou usuelle de l'enfant. Les sections dans lesquelles la langue de l'enseignement est le français et les sections dans lesquelles la langue de l'enseignement est le néerlandais, ne peuvent être placées sous une même direction et relèvent de l'inspection de leur régime linguistique.

"Art. 6. Dans les communes visées à l'article 3 (c-à-d., celles dotées d'un régime spécial en vue de la protection de leurs minorités), l'enseignement gardien et primaire peut être donné aux enfants dans une autre langue nationale si cette langue est la langue maternelle ou usuelle de l'enfant et si le chef de famille réside dans une de ces communes.

Cet enseignement ne peut être organisé qu'à la demande d'un nombre de chefs de famille égal à celui qui est fixé par application de l'article 4 de la loi du 29 mai 1959 modifiant la législation relative à l'enseignement gardien, primaire, moyen, normal, technique et artistique, qui ne trouvent pas à la distance fixée par application du même article une école organisant un tel enseignement.

La commune qui est saisie de la demande visée au deuxième alinéa doit organiser cet enseignement.

Le droit des parents défini à l'article 4 de la loi du 29 mai 1959 doit être respecté.

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<sup>9</sup>Quoted from: \_\_\_\_\_ de  
Ministère de l'Education Nationale et/la Culture,  
"Loi concernant le régime linguistique dans l'enseignement",  
le 30 juillet, 1963.





"Art. 7. L'article 4 n'est pas applicable aux écoles gardiennes et primaires, organisées par l'Etat à la demande du Ministre de la Défense national à Arlon, Bourg-Léopold et Ostende et uniquement accessibles aux enfants de militaires appartenant à un régime linguistique autre que celui de la région où ils sont stationnés. Pour l'application de cette disposition, le régime linguistique est déterminé, pour les officiers de carrière et de complément, par la première langue dont ils ont la connaissance approfondie; pour les autres militaires, par le régime qu'ils ont en temps utile déclaré être le leur.

Par arrêté royal motivé, délibéré en Conseil des Ministres et publié en entier au Moniteur belge, il peut être dérogé aux dispositions de l'article 4 au profit:

- (1) de classes uniquement accessibles à des enfants qui quittent la commune de leur domicile soit pour des raisons de santé, soit parce que leurs parents n'ont pas de résidence fixe et qui, conformément à la présente loi, recevraient dans cette commune l'enseignement dans une langue autre que celle de la région où l'école est située;
- (2) de sections d'enseignement spécial; de sections d'enseignement technique existant actuellement, et de sections d'enseignement moyen existant, servant de sections didactiques à une université et qui sont situées dans la même agglomération que cette université. Toutes ces sections sont uniquement accessibles à des enfants dont la langue maternelle ou usuelle n'est pas la langue de l'enseignement de la région linguistique où l'école est située, lorsque le chef de famille réside en dehors de cette région, ou bénéficie du régime particulier prévu à l'article 40 de la loi sur l'emploi des langues en matière administrative, ainsi qu'aux enfants de nationalité étrangère lorsque le chef de famille fait partie d'une organisation de droit des gens, d'une ambassade, d'une légation ou d'un consulat.

"Art. 8. Dans les conditions fixées par arrêté royal délibéré en Conseil des Ministres une partie du programme peut être donnée en français, dans les écoles de langue allemande, et en allemand, dans les écoles de langue française des communes de la région de langue allemande, à partir de la troisième année de l'enseignement primaire.

Les arrêtés pris par le Roi doivent être confirmés par la loi au plus tard un an après leur publication au Moniteur belge."

The teaching of a second language might commence in the fifth year of elementary schooling, or in the first year in German communes. The second language in Flemish regions is to be French, and the second language in French regions is to be Flemish, but it might be German in three communes. In the German language region, German is to be the





second language in French schools, and French in German schools. Second language teaching is obligatory in minority-protected communes (enumerated in Article 3 of the Law) for three hours per week at the 'deuxième degré' and five hours per week at the 'troisième et quatrième degrés', or <sup>and</sup> four/eight hours in linguistic frontier communes. In the linguistic frontier communes, certain matters might be taught through the second language at the secondary level, where "le Roi fixe ces matières ainsi que leur nombre pour chacune de ces communes."<sup>10</sup> According to Article 11, in the secondary schools of the capital region, where a second language figures on the programme of studies, it must be either French or Flemish.

Articles 13-16 provide that teachers must be able to prove competency in the language in which or through which they are to teach. Article 17 provides that in all cases where the maternal or normal tongue of a child might determine the medium through which his instruction might be performed, the school principal must have a certificate of the child's tongue, whether from the principal of a former school, from the parents, or from a special enquiry commission, before enrolling him in classes. The functioning of the system is to be subject to the control of two Linguistic Inspectors, one French, one Flemish. When the two disagree on a matter, the case is to be put before a Commission created by the King. The decisions of the Inspectors may be appealed.

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid., Article 10.



The new dispositions were to be put into effect in 1963/64 in the north and in the south, and in 1964/65 along the linguistic frontier. The "Loi du 14 juillet 1932 concernant le régime linguistique de l'enseignement primaire et de l'enseignement moyen" was abrogated by the new Law.

Article 21 of the new Law is of particular interest to linguistic minorities in Canada which might not be grouped in sufficiently strong communities to create their own schools. "Aussi longtemps que les chefs de famille de l'arrondissement de Bruxelles-Capitale n'ont pas la possibilité d'envoyer leurs enfants, à une distance raisonnable, dans une école officielle de langue néerlandaise, l'Etat crée annuellement dix écoles primaires avec section gardienne, dont l'emplacement est décidé sur avis de l'inspection linguistique."

#### 5. Availability of Texts for Studying Flemish:

Because of the rather limited international importance of the Netherlands language, <sup>11</sup> one might wonder whether much research had been accomplished with a view to the teaching of Nederlands as a second language. In fact, such has been the case. "Basic Nederlands originated in 1934 in an effort to teach the language to the native population of the Netherlands East Indies: a commission of 125 researchers, under the direction of J. F. de la Court, tested the frequencies of 1,000,000 words in an <sup>of</sup> great number/diverse Nederlands texts. An analysis of their findings showed that a knowledge of the basic 3,296

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<sup>11</sup> Nederlands, or a modified version of it, is spoken in Holland, Belgium, South Africa, and, to a certain extent, in areas of present or former Dutch influence, such as Surinam (Dutch Guiana) and Indonesia.





words is the key to an understanding of 95 per cent of any normal Nederlands text."<sup>12</sup> Utilizing this research, Gaston Vannes published the first edition of his Vocabulaire du Néerlandais de Base in 1939. In it, he categorized words with numbers from 1 to 7 to indicate varying frequencies.

In conjunction with A. Bruylant, Vannes also published a work entitled Basis-Woordenschat van de Nederlandse Handelstaal, containing a vocabulary of 1,100 words in common commercial use, and categorized with frequencies from 1 to 4. Vannes is also the author of the Grammaire du Néerlandais de Base. A progressive series of four primers, Op Nieuwe Wegen, and a number of Nederlands readers are available.

#### 6. Attitudes:

Several factors, other than legal, contribute to the ascendancy of the French language over Nederlands in Belgium. On the international scene, French enjoys a position immensely superior to that of Nederlands. History also militates against Nederlands.

"When the Belgians broke away from the Netherlands in 1830, there was a violent reaction against the Dutch and, in consequence, against their language by both Flemish and Walloons. As a result the Flemish upper class - the élite - has always spoken French and sent its children to French schools and universities. Distinguished Flemish writers like Maeterlinck and Verhaeren wrote in French - something which Flemish extremists find

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<sup>12</sup>R. E. Davies, op. cit., p. 82.





unforgivable and humiliating. Even today, out of seventy-two newspapers in the country, only five are printed in Flemish." <sup>13</sup>

To this, one might add that since the French-speaking south was initially more prosperous than the Nederlands-speaking north, French was more 'fashionable' than Nederlands, and as Flemings might rise on the socio-economic scale, there was a quite natural tendency for them to drift into a French-speaking milieu...

<sup>13</sup>Anne Francis, op. cit., p. 6. On the subject of attitudes and popular conceptions, it is worth noting another short passage in the Francis study. "Incidentally, while in Switzerland preparing this report, I saw ourselves as others see us when a prominent German Swiss newspaper editor said: 'We're so ashamed of the Jura business. We pride ourselves on tolerance and here we are behaving like English Canadians.'" (Page 15).



Comparative Studies in Education: Wales

Prepared by J.R. Hurley

for Professor H.E. Neatby,

Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism,

August 1965.





Comparative Studies in Education: Wales.

English-speaking Canadians, concerned as they have been in the past with 'national schools' and 'national education', are often prone to forgetting that education has not always been considered a function of the state. Indeed, it was only in the nineteenth century, with the rise of liberal democracy, that the state assumed comprehensive responsibilities in this field. Two liberal democratic ideals appear to have been brought to bear upon this development. Firstly, in order to secure the full participation of the citizen in the political, economic, and social life of the state, a minimum degree of education was deemed necessary for each individual. Secondly, if the ultimate fulfillment of the individual personality be the highest ideal of the democratic order, as Professors Corry and Hodgetts would have us believe, then once again the necessity of a certain degree of education makes itself felt, in order that the individual might have the necessary foundation and tools for the realization of his potential.

The liberal democrat's concern for the individual as an atomic entity (assuming, of course, that state-controlled education would not be antipathetical to individual self-development), and concern for the citizen as an integral member of the state, tend to neglect those bonds or associations which transcend the individual personality, and yet are not congruent with the state. Factors such as kinship, race, language, religion, region, and social development might and perhaps should enter into one's consideration. Wales, where education is administered under the authority of the central government of the United Kingdom, presents a striking example of the gradual realization on the part of the central authority that a regional, cultural and linguistic tenor might be lent to state-controlled schools without harm to the democratic objectives of the schools in question.





The relevance of a study of Welsh education to Canada is limited to those provinces in which there is a French-speaking minority. The schools of the French-speaking majority and of the English-speaking minority in Quebec enjoy privileges which are not comparable to those of the linguistic minority schools in Wales. Furthermore, any comparison is hampered by the quite unequal importance of Welsh and French from the point of past literature and current use.

1. Historical development of educational facilities:

After the Tudor unification of England and Wales through the Act of Union, 1536, fluency in English became imperative for those who aspired to public office in the new realm. "According to the Act, no 'persons that use the Welsh language' shall hold any office within 'this realm of England, Wales, or other the King's Dominion', unless they 'exercise the English speech'."<sup>1</sup> Rémi Chiasson noted that while Welsh was tolerated under Elizabeth I, it received no encouragement until men such as Griffith Jones sparked a nationalist revival toward the end of the seventeenth century.<sup>2</sup> According to Stuart W. Semple, state-supported free schools were created in 1650 during the Puritan era, which were subsequently maintained by English philanthropists after the Restoration; however, nothing is said about the number or importance of these schools.<sup>3</sup> These schools tended to emphasize English.

1. R.E. Davies, Bilingualism in Wales, Juta & Company, Ltd. (Cape Town: 1954), p. 1.

2. Rémi J. Chiasson, Bilingualism in the Schools of Eastern Nova Scotia, Les Editions Ferland (Québec: 1962), p. 83.

3. Stuart W. Semple, The Problem of Bilingualism in the Schools of Wales and Scotland, Department of Educational Research - O.C.E. (Toronto: 1964), p. 2.



It was during the nineteenth century that great strides were made in popular education in Wales. The British and Foreign School Society and the National Society were founded in the early 1800's to promote the education of the poor. "The National Society, with its Church of England schools, made more progress in Wales than the Methodist British Society, until Nonconformists united in 1843 to resist Church control of the inspection of schools. In South Wales, Independents and Baptists, refusing any state grant whatever, founded many Voluntary Schools of their own."<sup>4</sup> The institution of a small government grant to these societies in 1833 marked, according to Davies, the beginning of state interest in education.

There were riots in Wales in 1843. A three-man Commission was appointed to direct an inquiry into "the state of education in the Principality of Wales, especially into the means afforded to the labouring classes of acquiring a knowledge of the English language."<sup>5</sup> The Report caused a good deal of indignation. "The Commissioners maintained that 'the Welsh language is a vast drawback to Wales, and a manifold barrier to the moral progress and commercial prosperity of the people. It is not easy to over-estimate its evil effects'."<sup>6</sup> They further claimed that the Welsh people were plunged in ignorance and immorality because they spoke Welsh instead of English and went to chapel instead of church.

Robert Lowe's Revised Code of 1862 provided for state grants to schools on the basis of attendance and inspectors' examinations in reading, writing and arithmetic, but in English only, which tended to eradicate Welsh from the schools. Welsh nationalists blamed parents in part for this development, for the parents held that the children could learn enough Welsh at home and at Sunday school, and that they should learn English at school; with the advent of the industrial revolution in Wales, to parents solicitous of their children's future a sound training in English appeared essential for social and economic advancement.

4. R.E. Davies op. cit., p. 3.

5. Loc. Cit.

6. This





Not only was English actively encouraged, but Welsh was often prohibited on school premises. "Yet, in the middle of the nineteenth century, severe penalties were incurred by Welsh children who spoke their own language in school. A piece of wood (the 'Welsh not') was hung round the neck of such offenders, and fines were levied as well as thrashings administered. In this state of affairs the parents concurred, for only by a knowledge of English could their children hope to make any headway in the worls."<sup>7</sup>

Developments in education took place quite rapidly in Wales during the late nineteenth century. Forster's Education Act, 1870, provided for elected school boards for undenominational schools. In 1880 school attendance was made compulsory to the age of 13. In the same year, only 100 private and endowed schools provided secondary education for about 4,000 boys, while there were but three secondary schools for girls. The Aberdare Committee on Higher Education in Wales of 1880 laid stress on the need for intermediate education, which led to the Welsh Intermediate and Technical Act of 1889, establishing Intermediate and County schools with grants and rates. In spite of all of these advances, the Welsh language made little progress in the schools. "Even when, in 1888, the native language was given some status as a specific subject, many school boards and monoglot principals from England refused to allow it to be taught in their schools."<sup>8</sup> However, the creation of a Local Education Authority in each of the thirteen Welsh counties, under the Balfour Act of 1902, according to which each Authority would be responsible for the Council schools within its jurisdiction, made it possible in predominately Welsh counties to insist that Welsh be taught as a subject in the schools.

7. Loc. cit.

8. Ibid., p. 5.



It remains to be noted that the Hadow Report of 1926 led to the creation of Central (now Secondary Modern) schools for students between eleven and fifteen, which would provide a more practical training than that of the Grammar Schools. Finally, the Education Act of 1944 provided free education of all sorts, to be promoted by means of scholarships and grants.

2. Reasons for the decline of Welsh:

Not only has the percentage of persons living in Wales and speaking Welsh declined in recent years, but the absolute number of Welsh-speakers has also declined sharply. Stuart Semple has given several reasons for this decline:<sup>9</sup>

- (1) the emigration of potential Welsh leaders to other areas of employment;
- (2) the general urban drift of the population;
- (3) the wartime mobilization of the Welsh people coupled with the evacuation of English school children from England to Wales during the war;
- (4) general English immigration to Wales;
- (5) the increased incidence of linguistically mixed marriages;
- (6) the commercialization and mechanization of agriculture;
- (7) the enormous progress made in transport;
- (8) the pervading influence of English language cinema, radio, press, and television;
- (9) the decline in the influence of Welsh-speaking non-conformist chapels and cultural festivals.<sup>9</sup>

To these reasons, one should no doubt add the policy of the Department of Education in former years, which parents tended to support, as well as the staggering importance of English in international commerce

9. Stuart W. Semple, op. cit., p. 4.





and in scientific and technical developments since the Second World War. A few statistics might indicate the importance to be attached to this decline:<sup>10</sup>

1931: 909,000 Welsh speakers (including 97,932 monoglots);

1951: 714,000 Welsh speakers;

1961: 659,000 Welsh speakers (including 26,223 monoglots);

1931-1961 decrease: 27.8 per cent.

In 1901, 50 per cent of the total population of Wales spoke Welsh, but this had declined to 37 per cent in 1931.<sup>11</sup> Today it is estimated at about 25 per cent.<sup>12</sup>

3. Current educational policy in Wales:

Although by 1953 there had been a general acceptance in the Ministry of Education of a 'bilingual solution' to educational problems in Wales, this applied primarily to the teaching of Welsh as a subject. While the policy in question has been quite well applied in primary school, problems arise in secondary school. Other than in county Caernarvon, it is almost impossible for a student to continue Welsh right up to the school leaving age or the end of his secondary school career unless he drops some subject which he might wish to continue if the school organization were different. "A few schools in the North teach Welsh as a subject to all pupils throughout the schools course; but usually Welsh is made alternative, at some stage, to a modern foreign language, or to Latin, or even to a science or handicraft."<sup>13</sup>

The position of Welsh as a language of instruction for the Welsh-speaking has improved considerably in recent years. Initial impetus appears to have come from a private Welsh cultural organization, which founded a 'Welsh school' at Aberystwyth in September, 1939; others were founded in the Rhondda after the influx of English evacuee children during the War. The language of work and play in these primary

10. Ibid., p. 2

11. Nicholas Hans, Comparative Education - A Study of Educational Factors and Traditions, Routledge & Keegan Paul Limited (London: 1938), p.54.

12. From "Trans-Canada Matinée", C.B.C., March 1st, 1965.

13. R.E. Davies, op. cit., pp. 6-7.



schools was Welsh, although English was adequately taught. After the first cycle of students had passed the scholarship examinations in 1944, there was an increased enrollment, especially from the professional classes in the towns. A fifteen per cent spread of English-speaking students was maintained throughout the schools. Established under the authority of the Local Education Authorities, the 'Welsh schools' received a favourable inspection report in 1948. By the end of 1952, there were 24 'Welsh schools' in all, of which 15 were in South and 9 in North Wales.<sup>14</sup>

At the primary level, the Ministry of Education has become quite tolerant of Welsh, and has provided for a certain amount of education in Welsh, even in ethnically mixed schools. "A pleasing feature of parallel-medium or 'two stream' schools in Wales is their complete lack of separatism. The Primary School (North Road), Aberystwyth, reorganized in 1948, has 340 pupils, of whom 225 are English- and 112 Welsh-speaking. The staff of 12 is bilingual, and the spirit of the school on the whole is Welsh, with Welsh the language of the staff and staff meetings. English is used as the medium of instruction for the English-speaking section throughout, with Welsh introduced as a subject in the second year and taught in every subsequent year. For the Welsh-speaking section, English is introduced during the second half of the first year, the time devoted to it being increased during the second and subsequent years: by the third year, the medium of instruction has become 50 per cent Welsh/50 per cent English, and by the fourth equal facility in the use of both languages is aimed at. Separate playtimes are provided, but this is largely due to lack of space. Each class is divided into four houses named after Welsh saints; and each house is made up of both English- and Welsh-speaking children. Competition is keen in eisteddfodau and other school events, but the rivalry is between the various houses, not the two language groups."<sup>15</sup> The above description tends to confirm the observation of one critic who remarked that in Wales one should

14. Ibid., p. 13.

15. R.E. Davies, op. cit., p. 17.





not speak of the English- and Welsh-speaking, but rather of the English-speaking and bilingual Welsh. The situation whereby the use of Welsh as the language of instruction is successively reduced as one rises in the school resembles somewhat the situation faced by the Franco-Albertans in Canada. It is probable, since nothing is said of the increasing facility of the English-speaking students in Welsh as they progress in school studies, that the language for sports is largely English. This raises the question: should all school children in such schools be bilingual, if Welsh is to survive?

In 1953, the Central Advisory Committee for Education (Wales) noted that four language policies were then operative in Wales:<sup>16</sup>

- (a) Schools providing English only;
- (b) Schools providing Welsh on request;
- (c) Schools which taught Welsh to all pupils except those who requested exemption;
- (d) Schools which taught English and Welsh as equal and parallel activities.

The same Committee in the same year, however, made the following recommendations:<sup>17</sup>

- (1) Children should be taught English and Welsh according to their ability to profit from such teaching.
- (2) Only the mother tongue should be taught to children with physical and mental disabilities, or children of low ability and poor linguistic background.
- (3) Teaching of the second language should start after a child has entered junior school.
- (4) The second language should be acquired in a way similar to that of the mother tongue.
- (5) There should be an experimental approach to formal elements, i.e., 'active speech' and oral work.
- (6) Attention should be paid to levels of interest with respect to sounds, vocabulary and syntax.

16. Stuart W. Semple, op. cit., pp. 11-12.

17. Ibid., p. 12.



Caernarvonshire, more than any other county, appears to have modelled its policy on the Committee's recommendations. However, English appears to be generally used for teaching arithmetic. While Welsh schools are to develop the use of English as a teaching medium for children aged nine to eleven in "certain subjects", English is to be the medium of instruction in English speaking areas, with Welsh being used for "certain subjects". The relative importance of these "certain subjects" for the two linguistic blocs is not made clear. Flintshire has a relatively small proportion of Welsh-speaking students, yet Welsh is actively promoted there, sometimes against the wishes of the parents.<sup>18</sup> The bilingual policy adopted by the Ministry of Education in 1953 has apparently had certain positive results. The 15 Welsh-medium schools existing in the anglicized south in 1953 increased in number to 43 by 1963.

Although not dealing specifically with education, the Report on the Welsh Language Today, which was published by the Council for Wales and Monmouthshire in 1963, put forward recommendations that could not but strengthen the position of Welsh in the schools. The recommendations asked that Welsh be accorded 'official status', involving:

- (1) The right to use Welsh in courts of law, public enquiries, tribunals, local authority meetings and minutes thereof, and on public signs and notices throughout Wales.
- (2) The right to use Welsh in conducting business with administrative officials, in corresponding with government departments and local authorities; the right to receive rate demands and other local government documents in Welsh, and the right to use that language in seeking nomination as a candidate in Welsh elections for central and local government.<sup>19</sup>

18. R.E. Davies, op. cit., p. 14.

19. Stuart W. Semple, op. cit., p. 18.





With reference to the media of communication, the above report further recommended "an increase in Welsh-language broadcasts during peak hours to compensate for the absence of a Welsh-language national newspaper, and ~~the~~ increased provision for children of suitable Welsh-language television programmes. Acknowledging the restricted nature of the market for Welsh publications, the report advocates continuation of the government subsidy, the improvement of retail facilities for Welsh-language publications, and the provision of more suitable reading material for children in the 12-to-16 age group."<sup>20</sup>

Governmental agencies, then, appear to have become far more generously disposed towards the Welsh-speaking than ever in the past; yet education in Welsh remains very weak at the secondary level. It might be well to study why this should be so.

4. Obstacles to the extension of Welsh in education:

The principal obstacles to the extension of Welsh in education might be briefly summarized in point form:

- (1) Apparently, there is an inadequate vocabulary in Welsh, notably in mathematics and science.
- (2) There is a shortage of Welsh-language books and text-books. Of this, Chiasson notes, "At about the age of ten in the Welsh schools, English begins to be used for Arithmetic, Physical Training, English History, and Science. This is mainly due to the lack of good texts in these subjects in Welsh."<sup>21</sup>
- (3) There is a shortage of competent teachers.
- (4) Popular notions in the United Kingdom about a child's capacity to be taught in two languages do not tend to favour the expansion of Welsh programmes. "Attempts to upgrade Welsh in the secondary schools have met with some parental discontent on the grounds that the teaching of Welsh imposes an emotional strain upon their children, and has an unfavourable influence on their school examination results."<sup>22</sup>

20. Loc. Cit.

21. Rémi J. Chiasson, op. cit., p. 91.

22. Stuart W. Semple, op. cit., p. 7.



- (5) Welsh is recognized as a subject in the Civil Service and School Certificate examinations, but not as the medium for other examinations.
- (6) The non-Welsh-speaking majority in the National Union of Teachers is not favourable to an extension of Welsh as a medium of instruction.
- (7) The lack of classes with relatively homogeneous language experience hampers proper linguistic development.
- (8) The border counties tend to be anti-Welsh.
- (9) The preferred status of French as a second language, combined with the frequent necessity of choosing between Welsh and another desirable elective in secondary schools, has not aided the study of Welsh.
- (10) The facility with which certain secondary school Welsh examinations may be successfully passed lessens the prestige of the course.

"It is regrettable that so many Welsh-speaking pupils who take Welsh at School Certificate examination should still be entered for the second-language papers designed for those whose mother-tongue is English. The effect on the pupils themselves cannot but be harmful; apart from the fact that they are thereby denied the discipline and cultural enrichment which would accompany the serious study of the mother-tongue at the Secondary School stage, the amount of preparation required to enable many of them to pass is relatively small as to lead them to look upon Welsh as a 'soft-option' and so the language loses dignity and prestige."<sup>23</sup> Of course, where special provisions are made in English for the Welsh-speaking, the reverse might hold true. "Flintshire provides a Welsh paper to compensate the Welsh-speaking children for their inferior performances in the English paper. The Welsh paper contains two questions of less exacting standard which could encourage English-speaking children to attempt the paper."<sup>24</sup>

23. Rémi J. Chiasson, op. cit., p. 89

24. Stuart W. Semple, op. cit., p. 6.





(11) Finally, there is lack of social, economic, and even cultural motivation to learn Welsh. Welsh literature is highly conservative, and the culture tends to be regarded as a folk culture rather than as a dynamic one related, in some significant way, to the demands of modern life. The economic factor is significant. "A mastery of English is still the key to material success, and even in 'Welsh schools' and remote rural areas in North and Central Wales, the children were intensely anxious to read English to me. Parents naturally wish their children to do as well as possible, and particularly to escape from life in the heavy industries. But to put it bluntly: "There's no money in Welsh."25

5        The Teaching of Welsh:

Welsh, as a second language, is taught as a living language through the 'direct method'. In 1947, J.P. Vinay and W.O. Thomas published The Basis and Essentials of Welsh, with a basic vocabulary of 800 words. In 1948/49, the B.B.C. compiled a Basic Vocabulary for Welsh of about 1,300 words. At the same time, Miss Jennie Thomas, an active promoter of Welsh, produced the Second Language Survey. Materials for the teaching of Welsh, then, are available. While there is a shortage of bilingual teachers, the training received by such teachers is apparently quite good. Courses for the formation of bilingual instructors were started in Flintshire in the 1940's, and similar courses are offered at Bangor University. More recently, the Collegiate Faculty of Education in the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, has devised a draft syllabus for the preparation of bilingual teachers. "The teachers of Caernarvonshire get specialized training in bilingualism, i.e., more is required of them than the mere fact that they can speak the two languages. We have already deplored the fact that often in the past and indeed to a lesser extent in the present, teachers have been hired (in Nova Scotia)

25. R.E. Davies, op. cit., p. 21





as bilingual teachers whose sole claim to be 'bilingual teachers' was the fact that they could speak the second language to some degree never fully investigated. Here they get a training in methods and techniques of teaching the second language to a child and the problems associated with it. Bangor University has a Welsh Department and lecturers in bilingualism."<sup>26</sup> Radio programmes and, more recently, television programmes are being used to supplement classroom teaching. Finally, recognizing the anglicizing effect of the play-ground in the past, the Caernarvonshire Education Authority compiled a list of some 150 'play talk' sentences to encourage the use of Welsh during recreation.

26. Rémi J. Chiasson, op. cit., p. 92

